

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMISSION

————— MEETING SUMMARY —————

Public Health Auditorium
1601 East Hazelton Avenue
Stockton CA

Wednesday, March 15, 2000 – 7:00 a.m.

(approved 03/29/00)

1. Meeting was called to order by Chair Gutierrez at 7:05 a.m. Roll call was taken and all commission members were in attendance except for Commissioner Grande, with an excused absence.
2. Meeting summary from March 1, 2000 was presented for approval.

Motion: Approve meeting summary from March 1, 2000. (Mitchell/Adubofour – Motion passed 7–0) with Commissioner Gutierrez abstaining)

3. Presentation: Child Care

Louise Johnston, San Joaquin County Office of Education, stated that she was appearing in her capacity as local Child Care Coordinator. Ms. Johnston provided data regarding the numbers of children in San Joaquin County under the age of five, costs of child care as percentages of the median family income, descriptions of the various types of child care, the limited number of spaces available relative to the number needed, and the resultant large waiting lists. She outlined the needs not only for additional resources, but also for improved child care worker qualifications, training, retention, special skills, and availability beyond regular work day schedules. She suggested that the Commission: lobby for additional subsidized child care monies; lobby for extension of the two-year Welfare-To-Work child care funds; lobby for expansion of small child care family houses to large; lobby cities to make large family child care by right rather than subject to use permits and fees; initiate action to bring child care providers and service providers together; and suggested that the Commission provide grants or start-up costs for new facilities.

Ms. Johnston referred to child care initiatives in two Bay Area counties that would raise benefits for child care providers in order to increase retention. In response to a question from Commissioner Mitchell, Ms. Johnston stated she would provide Commissioners with copies of the initiatives.

3. Presentation: School Readiness

Corrine Cervantes, Director of Success by 6, provided information based upon the experiences of staff working with distressed families in their homes. She described home environments wherein basic necessities were lacking and the absence of knowledge of available services served as barriers to appropriate interventions. Ms. Cervantes emphasized the importance of having persons available to go into the homes to work directly with these families, to link them to resources, to help them meet essential needs such as food, housing, education, health care, and transportation. Ms. Cervantes stated that agencies need to work collaboratively and to bring services into the neighborhoods. She encouraged Commissioners to invest in, and use, community centers for services, and to support additional parent educators to assist families.

Following Ms. Cervantes' presentation, Commissioners engaged in a discussion of ways to increase disseminating information regarding available resources and services to families coming in contact with public agencies. Commissioner Vera advised that Child Protective Services' (CPS) staff were looking at ways to develop referral advisories in CPS cases that are currently "evaluated out" or closed at intake without services.

5. Comments from the public:

- a. Bobbie Bivens, Gemini, Inc., stated that he hopes the Commission will give serious consideration to making sure that services take place throughout the community. He stated that historically, south Stockton has not received its share of services as well as southeast and southwest Stockton. He further urged that the Commission accepts input from the receivers of services and from the local communities of potential candidates for services.
- b. Rachel Vargas, Delta Health Care WIC, wished to remind the Commission of the importance of breast feeding for healthy growth, learning, and readiness for school. Ms. Vargas provided a handout for Commissioners on breast feeding.
- c. Susan DeMontigny, San Joaquin Public Health, referred to her previous presentation which included information regarding lead poisoning. She brought samples of candies imported from Mexico that produce damaging effects on children and stated that efforts at educating the public were underway.
- d. Ginger Wick, Immunization Coordinator for San Joaquin County Public Health Services, stated that of the ten most important developments of the past 100 years in the field of public health, immunizations was listed as number

one. She wished to remind Commissioners of the vital importance of ensuring the immunizations of children, especially under the age of two years.

- e. Joan Richards, Family Resource and Referral Service, and the System Advisory Group, wished to emphasize the importance of including a variety of languages in disseminating information.
6. Presentation: Early Brain Development

Maria Fisicaro, Dr. Carlos Bonilla, and Joy Goss provided an overview of the anatomical and neurophysiological structures of the brain and the roles of nature and nurture in shaping the future development and behaviors of children from prenatal to early formative years. Pointing out how technological advances have provided insights previously inaccessible, Dr. Bonilla described the differences observed in the brains of children from stimulating environments versus those from deprived and unnurturing environments. The trio asserted that adequate stimulation involving attention, love, physical contact, verbal interaction, and personal care was critical to the development of a healthy and vibrant ready-to-learn child. The key to achieving this result they argued lay in the functioning of the parents and family. Ms. Fisicaro, Dr. Bonilla, and Ms. Goss urged the Commission to support and fund any and all programs that would help parents provide the kind of child nurturing they had described.

Ms. Fisicaro in conclusion presented to the commission a VHS tape titled, “Ten Things Every Child Needs”, which includes several successful programs in early childhood intervention.

7. Report from Strategic Planning Subcommittee:

-Proposed dates and locations for community meetings

Motion: Approve the dates of April 26, April 27, May 2, May 3, and May 4, meetings to be held in Lodi, Manteca, Stockton (2), and Tracy. (Smith/Mitchell – Motion passed 8–0)

-Consideration of changes to regular Commission meeting schedule.

The Commission agreed to the proposed schedule.

8. *Meeting was adjourned to March 19, 2000 at 1:00 p.m. (Fujii/Vera – Motion passed 8–0)*